

Remarks

Claims 1-10 were pending.

Claims 6 and 7 are canceled.

Claims 1 and 8 are amended.

Claims 1-5 and 8-10 are now pending.

Claim 1 is amended to add the language:

“where the rolling is effected by passing the pre-shaped, still plastic material through two or three squeeze rollers with smooth and polished surfaces and the subsequent impressing is effected by processing the rolled out plastic material with one, two or three linearly embossed shaping rollers,

where the material is impressed with a granular structure which provides predetermined breaking points in an impressed product mat and

where the impressed product mat is allowed to harden on a cooling belt followed by comminuting to form granules along the impressed lines”

Support is found on page 20, lines 20-35 and page 21, lines 11-13 and original claim 6.

Support is also found in the working Examples on pages 21-24.

Claim 8 is amended to have proper antecedent basis.

No new matter is added.

Claims 1, 4-5 and 9 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Tonnvik, et al., U.S. Pat. No. 6,569,933.

The Examiner admits that Tonnvik is silent on impressing and states that rolling would inherently result in impressing.

Tonnvik does not anticipate the present claims. Tonnvik does not at all disclose the present rolling into a strip followed by impressing the rolled strip with embossed shaping rollers.

Claims 2-3 and 10 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tonnvik in view of Neri, et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,844,042.

Neri is cited as teaching present additives of claims 2 and 3 as well as a powder sieve.

These rejections are addressed as above.

Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tonnvik in view of Hovis, et al., U.S. Pat. No. 4,842,794.

These rejections are likewise overcome by amendment. The combined disclosures do not teach the present impressing to form granular structures that provide predetermined breaking points. Alternatively, Hovis teaches apertured thermoplastic films.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tonnvik in view of Legge, et al., U.S. pat. No. 4,457,775.

Legge is cited as disclosing a continuous steel belt.

These rejections are also overcome by amendment.

In view of the present amendments, Applicants submit that each of the 35 USC 102(b) and 35 USC 103(a) rejections are addressed and are overcome.

The Examiner is kindly requested to reconsider and to withdraw the present rejections.

Applicants submit that the present claims are now in condition for allowance and respectfully request that they be found allowable.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Stevenson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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Attachment: Petition for a 2 month extension of time